less than 30 per cent only in five States viz; Bihar (18.20%), Chhattisgarh (25.50%), Jharkhand (20.85%), Tripura (19.06%) and West Bengal (24.98%). Due to various socio-economic reasons there is lesser availability of qualified female primary school teachers in a number of States. However, the percentage of female teachers to total number of teachers in primary schools is increasing every year.

Primary schools

690. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of primary schools has gone up by an impressive 14.19 per cent from the last survey to stand at 6.51 lakhs;

(b) whether it is also a fact that many States were found to have a growth rate of less than 10 percent; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Yes Sir. According to 7th All India School Education Survey (Reference Date: 30th September, 2002) the total number of primary schools in the country are 6.51 lakhs registering a growth of 14.19% from the 6th All India School Education Survey (Reference Date: 30th September, 1993).

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The States with a growth rate of less than 10% from the 6th All India School Education Survey are Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Delhi, Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry.

Verification of certificates

691. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that those aspiring for jobs abroad are required to get their degrees/certificates verified by the Department of Education;

(b) whether this work has been decentralised and, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that the regional offices are not functioning properly and the aspirants continue to come to Delhi for the purpose from far-off places; and

(d) if so, what remedial measures Government are going to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) No, Sir. Only some countries in the Middle East, Africa and some parts of Europe insist on authentication of certificates of educational qualifications by Ministry of Human Resource Development for Indian citizens intending to go to these countries for employment.

(b) Yes, Sir. To facilitate authentication of educational certificates, this Ministry in consultation with Ministry of External Affairs has decentralized the power of authentication to 13 (Thirteen) State Governments from where a large number of people seek employment abroad namely, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, West Bengal, Gujarat, Bihar, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. In the State of Kerala, which contributes to the bulk of authentication seekers, three Regional Authentication Centres (RACs) at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode have been opened by the State Government. Besides this, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and West Bengal have also started authentication of educational certificates.

(c) As a result of authentication centres opened by many of the State Governments, the number of authetication seekers coming to Delhi has reduced recently. Since some States have not yet started the authentication work, the people of the concerned States continue to visit this Ministry for authentication of their education certificates.

(d) The Ministry has already issued the necessary guidelines/ clarifications to the various State Governments regarding procedure to be followed for authentication of educational certificates by the State Governments, in accordance with the requirements prescribed by the Ministry of External Affairs.